

SPOKE

Conestoga College, Kitchener

JULY 31, 2000

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Poverty stats alarming

Print shop may be contracted out

By Tracy Ford

Conestoga College may contract out its print shop to a private firm. The college sent out requests July 19 asking companies to submit proposals to operate the print shop for a 10-year term.

Kevin Mullan, vice-president of finance for Conestoga College, said the college is looking at all its options before choosing to contract out the department or continuing running it the way it is.

"We have to look at all our options," he said. "That would be normal in most of our large investment situations."

The request for proposals was sent to large print organizations. It specified the college must receive proposals by July 31. A short list of possible companies will be made and presentations by the bidder will be held on Aug. 2. If an agreement is made, the contract will go into effect on Oct. 1. "We may or may not accept anything," said Mullan.

"The primary reason is we know there will be a need for a significant investment in print equipment," he said.

The print shop needs several hundred thousand dollars for equipment and the college is looking for ways to cut costs, according to Mullan.

On July 19 the print shop staff were informed of a meeting where they first heard of the possibility of contracting out their work. The four employees directly affected by the change were given copies of the request for proposals and were told no final decision had been made.

In the request, the college is asking for an outside company to run the print shop on campus with the

same or improved service. The bidder must assume all current commitments, including current staffing and equipment leases.

The bidder must, along with other specific requirements, provide comparable full-time employment and benefit coverage with the potential for advancement for current full-time print shop staff.

The request also states that this option is exploratory and the college doesn't have to accept any offer.

Mullan said telling the employees before the request was sent out was fair.

"We could understand if we were over staffed and there were people with nothing to do, but we all work hard."

Lynn Knowles, reproduction operator

"It's only fair to let the employees know before you (the college) ever mailed that (the request for proposals) out," he said.

This is the first time the college has attempted to contract out a department, and Mullan said there aren't going to be any others. "It should be made clear there is no dissatisfaction with the staff there," said Mullan.

"All I can offer is the assurance that the employees will be in just as good a position as they are now," he said.

He also said the college's response to the proposals depends upon the number and quality of replies.

"If we have no proposals in, then we have to look at how to run the print shop with the funds available to invest," said Mullan.

Cathy McManus, a printer who has worked at the college for six years, said, "We knew something was wrong (when the meeting was called).

"We are all dedicated workers. We all work hard together," she said.



Lynn Knowles, a reproduction operator for 11 years and this year's winner of the employee of the year award, works with a press in the print shop.

(Photo by Tracy Ford)

She said similar situations had happened at previous jobs. She said if the print shop employees are no longer employees of the college but employees of the contracted company, they will no longer be protected by the union.

"One of the reasons the college is number one is because of the service we give them," McManus said.

Lynn Knowles, a reproduction operator for 11 years, who received an employee of the year award this year, said the print shop offers a valuable service.

"We could understand if we were over-staffed and there were people with nothing to do, but we all work hard and the figures have increased," she said.

According to Vince Alviano, an employee of print shop for 20 years and now the supervisor, production increased from five million copies in 1995-96 to seven

million copies in 1999-00. "Impressions have tripled with the same amount of staff," said Alviano.

The print shop has always been a pleasant place to work, according to the staff, and all of the employees who work in the department are satisfied with their jobs.

"No one has quit; they just retired," Alviano said.

A collective agreement letter of understanding says contracting out any department where public service employees are employed has specific guidelines. An employee who has completed a probationary period cannot be fired if the department is contracted out. The new employer must offer comparable terms and conditions of employment.

The current contract with the Ontario Public Services Employees Union expires Aug. 31.

Staff from WLU visit literacy lab at Doon

By Jes Brown

Conestoga College's Literacy Lab has attracted attention from outside of the college community.

Three staff members from Wilfrid Laurier University — librarians Virginia Gillham and Sophie Bury and information technology specialist Rene Paquin — visited the Literacy Lab July 18.

They came to see how Conestoga works with adaptive technology.

Su Lyttle, computer consultant for the Literacy Lab, said the visit went well.

"Our three visitors came to see how the adaptive software and hardware that we have might gel with their situation in a library setting."

Gillham said she was interested in the Literacy Lab and what

the library staff at Wilfrid Laurier could learn from it.

"I was very impressed," Gillham said. "It's a wonderful facility." Wilfrid Laurier University is looking into renovating its library and is doing a study of special needs.

Lyttle told them about the learning opportunities project, which funds the Literacy Lab at Conestoga. She suggested the visitors talk to Cathy Potvin

from Conestoga's learning resource centre, because Lyttle and Potvin often work together and share ideas, and if anything ever happened to the lab, Lyttle hopes the LRC would take it over.

"It was fruitful," Lyttle said. "I'd like to see how they take on any of this information." She said she hopes WLU incorporates some of the lab's resources in their library.

Children still go hungry in the year 2000

Federal politicians passed a resolution 10 years ago to eliminate child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. It's 2000, and children continue to go to school hungry.

Waterloo Region and Guelph still have numerous breakfast programs feeding hundreds of children who arrive at school hungry because of poverty.

According to the latest poverty fact book, our country has \$1.3 million more poor households than it did 25 years ago.

Although this number is startling, it is not surprising, considering the ever-increasing number of government cut-

Single parents tend to be the poorest, partly because more than 80 per cent are women who earn less than men.

backs. Welfare cheques were slashed by 21.6 per cent by the province in 1995.

The poverty fact book was released July 19 by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) and by its standard you're considered poor if you are a family of three living on less than \$24,252 a year.

In Waterloo Region the average household income is \$61,244.

The council found poverty rates are highest among families with parents under the age of 25. Single parents tend to be the poorest, partly because more than 80 per cent are women who earn less than men.

The national poverty rate among young families doubled from 1981 to 1997.

The council's report concluded that children from low-income families are less healthy, less able to develop skills and more destructive.

They are also more likely to endure more humiliation than wealthier children.

An average poor family earns only \$18,050, which only covers the bare necessities such as rent, food and clothes.

Waterloo Region surveys show more than half of poor families are employed but not paid enough to cover the bare necessities.

There are about 56,000 adults and children living in varying degrees of poverty in the region and the welfare caseload is about 26,000.

The gap between the rich and poor continues to widen because even if people are working they can still be living in poverty.

If someone is making minimum wage, it is often not enough to get by. Why is our government surprised when some people choose to stay on welfare rather than work?

As the cost of everyday living continues to rise it is becoming increasingly harder for some, especially single-parent families, to make ends meet.

A 1997 Canada Mortgage and Housing survey showed the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Waterloo Region was \$636 while the welfare housing allowance for a family of three was \$554.

Rent for a three-bedroom unit was \$800 while welfare allowed \$602 to house a family of four.

From these latest statistics it's evident that government is not doing enough to help fight poverty in this country.



Violence won't just stop

What an apathetic bunch Canadians are. In fact, we are known worldwide for our passivity.

Certain things get us riled up — not being allowed to smoke in bingo halls, when the Leafs lose the Stanley Cup, the arrival of royalty from a country across the sea, or perhaps a long line up at Tim Hortons.

But when we are faced with a lethal and horrifying epidemic we curl up in sad, docile heaps.

In the past two months, six women in southern Ontario have been slain by their partners.

One woman was shot execution-style after being dragged naked into her home after delivering her infant to safety, another was viciously stabbed by her husband who then went on to shoot their four children.

Another woman was stabbed within the confines of her house with its cutouts on the porch with the word "Welcome" written on them.

Studies have shown that women are five times more likely to be killed by a spouse than by a stranger, yet women cannot walk the streets at night alone without fearing horrifying dangers.

According to demographer David Baxter, the overwhelming evidence in data collected shows that women should always hang out with strangers.

Battered women's shelters in the Kitchener area report a flood of crisis calls from women after the Luft



Julie Porter

family were found dead in their home, worried that they too will end up that way. In droves, they arrived at shelters around southern Ontario, telling crisis workers that their partners threatened to do to them what Ralph Hadley did to Gillian Hadley — that they too would end up as a good front page story in newspapers across the country.

Faced with enormous cutbacks, these shelters are doing what they can, but they can really only hope to keep the women safe; they cannot end domestic violence.

Our judges don't consider domestic violence much different

The overwhelming evidence in data collected shows that women should always hang out with strangers.

from minor crimes and police are not adequately equipped or educated to deal with the deeply complex psychology of battered women and their batterers.

Our children are inundated with violent images daily, and pornography, often a boy's first means of sexual education, is chock full of demeaning images of women.

Our female children are taught early to be afraid or cautious, and children of both sexes are made to understand that divisions between the sexes exist, unquestionably, and that males are genetically wired with violent tendencies.

And as violence against women

seems not to be stopping any time soon, Canadians clutch their wallets and our political parties spout off about taxcuts.

Domestic violence is not new. In 1999, 55 of the 164 homicides in Toronto were women who died at the hands of their partners. According to a study done by Baxter, one in four women have experienced some sort of threat of violence in their lives.

It is not a new phenomenon and yet, despite these horrifying acts, Ontarians vote in another Conservative government, whose massive cutbacks have left facilities — whose job it is to protect those victims — floundering and sputtering.

Anselma House in Kitchener has faced cutbacks in public education, an area where work is desperately needed.

Canadians have their priorities wrong. Society is only as strong as its weakest link, and at this point its weakest links are the boys and men who are conditioned to give in to urges of violence.

We should be pouring our resources into educating our young, on rehabilitation programs for first-time offenders and shelters for women and children.

We should demand from our government, our law-enforcers and our criminal justice system, that we put issues of domestic violence in the forefront.

Canadians boast that we are recognized by the United Nations as being a country that is the best to live in, but if many in our country face the daily threat of violence, can we really speak with any integrity?

SPOKE

Keeping Conestoga College connected

SPOKE is published and produced weekly by the journalism students of Conestoga College.

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College receives \$1.2 million for maintenance work

now,” he said. “There are a lot of buildings and a lot of mechanical systems.”

The money will be delegated through a priority list the college has made in case such a grant is awarded.

Tibbits said the government can grant money at any time and the college sets priorities on where the money will be spent.

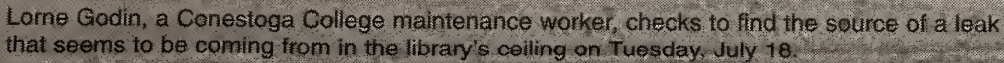
"It's like running a house," he said. "You have to make sure your furnace is up-to-date."

He said Conestoga's campuses are well maintained and haven't shown any major need of repair.

"We have always done a good job at maintaining (the college) but it just ensures others that our electrical system isn't going to break down," Tibbits said.

Tibbits said the money is assigned by the government depending upon the number of students a college or university has.

The college will also receive \$14.2 million as part of the SuperBuild funding, announced in June, to help build another wing with more classrooms and to reorganize the maze of corridors in the D wing, close to where the new wing will be located.



(Photo by Petra Lampert)



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Stressed out

Anxiety and depression on rise among Conestoga students

By Petra Lampert

If you're a student at Conestoga experiencing anxiety or depression, you're probably not alone.

According to college counsellor Lynn Robbins, there's been an increase in the number of students suffering from such problems.

"I've noticed an increase in anxiety and depressant symptoms that are presented in our office," she said, including an increasing number of men with these symptoms seeking help.

She said it's good that men are starting to feel comfortable asking for help.

"We're available to anyone who's a student," she said.

Robbins said counsellors help students who are clinically diagnosed with depression and anxiety.

She said staff have received calls from students' doctors to see if counselling is available and to find out what other types of services the college offers.

Robbins said students come in to

seek help with issues such as academic stress, heavy course loads, relationships, family problems and financial concerns.

She said students seem to be facing more demands in and out of school.

"I've noticed an increase in anxiety and depressant symptoms that are presented in our office."

*Lynn Robbins,
college counsellor*

Robbins added that some students also feel anxious about their work term placements because they know they'll have to perform.

"To support that, we have designed an anxiety course," she said.

The course is called anxiety and

personal performance, and will be offered in January as an elective.

Students who have identified anxiety as a barrier to their success in school may benefit from taking the course since it teaches the nature of anxiety.

The course focuses on performance, test and public speaking anxiety. Students can choose an area they want to concentrate on.

Students interested in the course can come to student services in the fall and sign up. One of the teachers will meet with the student to determine if the course is suitable for them.

Starting in the fall there will also be a variety of groups and workshops available to students.

Workshops include stress management, time management and effective textbook reading. Some groups include relaxation, public speaking anxiety and test anxiety.

For further information regarding groups and workshops, or counselling, students can visit student services, room 2B02.



College counsellor Lynn Robbins displays the schedule for upcoming groups and workshops.

(Photo by Petra Lampert)

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CANADA'S

Physical Activity Guide

to Healthy Active Living

Students needing help can turn to counsellors

By Petra Lampert

During one college year, counsellor Lynn Robbins has counselled over 200 students.

From September 1998 to May 1999, the student services counsellor saw 221 individuals.

Robbins said it's a steady stream of students from September to April, but the summer is also busy.

Robbins said the summer is when student services staff is busy preparing for the fall semester and completing tasks like filling out reports, compiling statistics and delegating teaching duties.

She said during the fall and winter semesters there's more staff, but in the summer there's usually only one counsellor.

Robbins said all five counsellors take turns working during the summer to ensure at least one is available.

She said in a typical week during the summer she usually has five students per day that are

booked for appointments and several drop-in students, adding that a lot of students drop in to ask questions, look for resources, or use the housing registry.

Robbins said the recent rash of domestic violence, like the Luft family murders, has also caused an increase in the number of people coming to student services seeking counselling.

She said student services counsellors already work with a lot of people who are in abusive relationships and trying to get out, but it impacts the office when these incidents occur and are portrayed in the media because people identify through numbers.

"Their fear increases during this time."

She said for the week of July 17 she also had several students come in who suspect they may have a learning disability.

Robbins said if students think they have a learning disability that's affecting their grades, it's a good idea to come in before the fall semester begins, since testing

takes a fair amount of time.

According to Robbins, another busy time for staff is May, when there's an increased need for counsellors to sit on appeal boards, since more programs discontinue students at that time than at Christmas.

"It's good for students to know what their rights and responsibilities are at the college," Robbins said.

Student services counsellors are required to have a masters level degree.

Robbins said three of the counsellors have their masters in social work and two have a masters of education.

Students needing help can go to student services, room 2B02, to make an appointment.

A counselling contract usually lasts for six to eight weeks, but if more help is needed students can receive additional counselling.

Summer hours of operation, effective May 1 to Aug. 31, are Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Get a jolt. Read Spoke

Abuse victims get help at student services

By Julie Porter

Women who are experiencing violence or are afraid of their partners can seek support at the student services department.

According to Lynn Robbins, a counselor with student services, many women seek the aid of counselors to gain support that they need to get them through the fear of being in an abusive situation. Part of the process, according to Robbins, is to be supportive and provide information. She said finding out the needs of the woman is the most important thing.

"The issues are so different with each woman," said Robbins. "Some women just want to know that they are not worthy of such abuse; some are fleeing, and we offer support and options. Sometimes we work at self-esteem issues to help women see that it is not their fault what is happening to them."

Robbins said domestic violence is prevalent in society, but because it happens within the confines of a home, society often turns a blind eye.

"The media is there (at incidents of domestic violence that turn to homicide) because something drastic has happened. The media, however, is not in the living rooms of every home."

Robbins said that school is an important place for women who live in violent homes.

"Women can develop separate ties from their partners here," she said. "They can thrive in an atmosphere away from their troubled homes and gain self-esteem through being in an environment where what they do is valued."

She said that she could not speak



Lynn Robbins, a counselor at student services, displays a couple of the pamphlets available in the office. It is her hope that women in trouble will feel that they can come and talk with her.

(Photo by Julie Porter)

for the women, but that she feels Conestoga is a safe place for a woman to be.

Robbins said that there are many facilities in the K-W and Cambridge areas that she refers women to, but that often issues of violence remain behind closed doors since some women don't seek help because they do not feel comfortable or are embarrassed about their situation.

Robbins said that relatively new legislation called the duty to report policy could be a reason a woman may not feel comfortable talking to a counselor.

Under the policy, if a woman discloses that her children (under 16) are witness to abuse, or if the

woman is in a situation to hurt herself or others, student services must report the situation to Family and Children Services.

Although a woman may be

"The issues are so different with each woman."

*Lynn Robbins,
counselor with
student services*

scared of reporting her situation for fear her children be taken away from her, Robbins said the policy is important.

"Research shows that those who witness abuse tend to be abusive,"

said Robbins.

Robbins said that the policy could be a double-edged sword.

"We have to be up front. We have to say 'you're coming to sit down with me and what you're telling me is confidential unless you bring up these three things.' What if one of the three things is what the woman needs help with? Will she still feel comfortable talking then?"

Robbins said the policy "really helps children. It helps social services get into the home and get the children to safety."

According to Mary Kalau, coordinator of volunteer, outreach and children's services at Anselma House in Kitchener, a battered women's shelter, the act is striving

to help not only the woman but also the children.

"Prior to March 31, 1999, there was nothing there to really protect children from witnessing family violence," said Kalau. "Parents often just lost children to foster homes, or the children would fall through the cracks. The amended child welfare act includes protecting children from witnessing violence. Duty to report simply means that professionals must report abuse."

Kalau said that in the past, shelters were reluctant to report child abuse or the witness of abuse, in fear of re-victimizing the woman.

"In terms of children's issues, we are now trying to support the mom in a way that is not placing blame," said Kalau.

"It is a worry that an abused woman might not come to the shelter for fear of losing her kids," she said.

Kalau said that programs are being implemented to bring together Violence Against Women agencies and Family and Children's Services to find a way to more effectively work together so that the interests of the child and mother are dealt with, and so women can freely report violence without worrying about losing their children.

Despite the policy, many women still find themselves at Anselma House after fleeing an unsafe situation.

Kalau said that last year Anselma house had a 105 per cent occupancy rate, and fielded 6,000 crisis calls.

"Every time something happens like the Luft scenario, we are inundated with calls," she said. "Women worry the same thing will happen to them."

Many programs at Doon designed to keep people safe

By Julie Porter

Several programs designed to help women be safe exist at the college.

Emergency phones, outdoor lighting, and programs like Walk Safe have been implemented to preserve women's safety at Conestoga.

Walk Safe, which was partially funded by the Campus Safety For Women Grant, is a program that is run by Conestoga Students Inc. and campus security. Walk Safe operates outside door one and five. Walk Safe's aim is to provide people who are feeling intimidated with an escort to walk them from the college buildings to the parking lots. The escort carries a radio and can reach security immediately if the need arises.

Walk Safe runs Monday - Thursday 6:45 p.m. to 10:45 p.m.

According to John Tribe, security representative, several people use Walk Safe every week.

Tribe said 16 closed-circuit TV cameras watched by security guards in the security office constantly monitor the school in another effort to make Conestoga a safe environment.

"We are not so much interested in catching people, but in preventing an incident before it happens," said

The monitoring system is to be updated partially through funding from the Campus Safety For Women grant, and may expand to cover more areas of the school.

"The purpose of the cameras is to make sure Conestoga College is a safe place, and it is," said Tribe. "We had three assaults in the last year, which is not a lot considering the population."

Tribe said that Conestoga College is fortunate to have few incidents of violence.

"We had three assaults last year, which is not a lot, considering the population."

*John Tribe,
security representative*

"We want to be pro-active, not reactive," he said.

Tribe said that when an incident is brought to the attention of security, an investigation starts immediately. Criminal offenses are handed over to the police.

Kim Radigan, co-ordinator of health and safety at Conestoga College, said that Al Hunter, head of security, is an excellent resource for

students in need of safety tips or aid in dealing with a situation.

She said that because Conestoga students often find themselves away from home for the first time, they often take risks off campus that aren't too wise.

"The campus may be the safest place for them to be," said Radigan.

Radigan said that there have been several cases of women whose spouses or ex-spouses were stalking them at the college. She said school security can help these women by watching out for the person and getting them off campus.

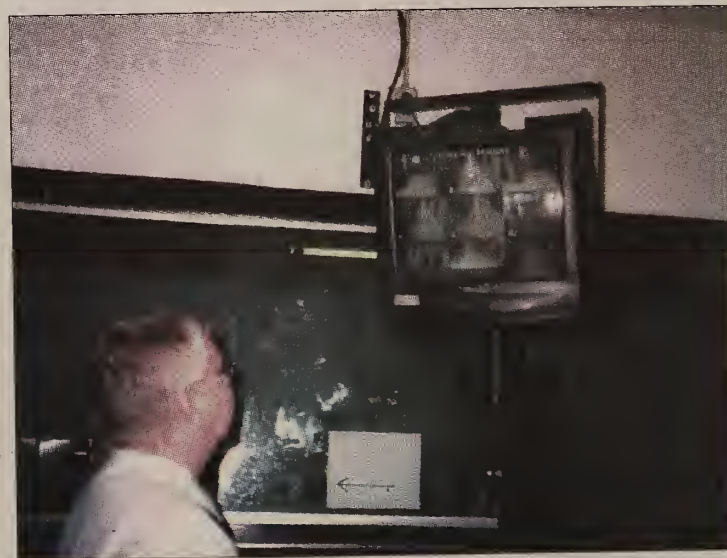
Radigan said that the school never gives out personal information on students, so that a stalker would not be able to obtain the whereabouts or schedules of any student at the school.

Radigan said the harassment policy protects students.

The harassment policy, written in harmony with the Ontario Human Rights Code, works to preserve equal treatment and freedom from harassment for anyone affiliated with the college.

Women who feel that they are being harassed can get access to the policy through student services, the health and safety office or security.

Radigan said she feels an important aspect to consider in the safety



Roger Sharpe, a Conestoga College security officer, monitors the cameras at Doon Campus that are used to keep the students safe.

(Photo by Julie Porter)

of women is proper education. She said that she believes that strategies for success, a mandatory course for all Conestoga students, has a section on preventing and identifying domestic violence.

Radigan said that through the Campus Safety For Women Grant, the women's resource group has been able to purchase many resources to deal with issues of violence against women.

"Videos such as Domestic Violence & Substance Abuse and A Love That Kills and books for the learning resource centre are intended to educate men and women about violence."

The women's resource group was also able to have speakers at the school to talk about gender relations, and pamphlets which address violence issues are put out around the school.

Online learning

Students can use Internet to receive course credits

By Tracy Ford

Online learning is becoming an alternate way of getting an education as people desiring to earn course credit head to their computers and not classrooms.

Formation of an advisory committee for online learning was announced July 20. The committee will advise post-secondary institutions on how to give students the opportunity to participate in online learning.

Chaired by David Johnston, president of the University of Waterloo, the committee consists of presidents from various universities and colleges, including the vice-president of Sheridan College, Sheldon Levy.

Andy Clow, Conestoga's dean of business for part-time and full-time studies, said there are various reasons for a student to want to earn a course credit through the Internet. "Commitment and distance are reasoning for opting for Internet

courses," he said. "Others prefer to do it via the Internet as opposed to coming to class."

The college's focus for online courses has mainly been business oriented, according to Clow.

"Commitment and distance are reasoning for opting for Internet courses."

*Andy Clow,
dean of business*

Courses include accounting 1 and 2 as well as business law, compensation, industrial relations, economics, and health and safety. Some of Conestoga's newest Internet courses include qualifying mathematics, for entry into college, and continuance improvement processes, a quality assurance program for ISO.

The college belongs to a group called Contact South, which was

created five years ago (Conestoga has been involved for the past three years). Contact South is a co-operative of 20 other colleges that help each other establish courses through the Internet. Normally four or five students would be in each online learning class, a number that can not be sustained by an individual college due to the costs.

"The reason Contact South was created was because any one college generally couldn't support it based on student numbers," said Clow.

"I think it is something that is slowly developing," he said. "Still, the preferred method of learning is with a teacher in a classroom."

Online learning fees are the same as regular tuition and information about courses can be found in the continuing education catalogue.

Clow said he feels online learning is better than correspondence, a distance education course taken though the mail, because students can get more feedback quicker.

Dust-off



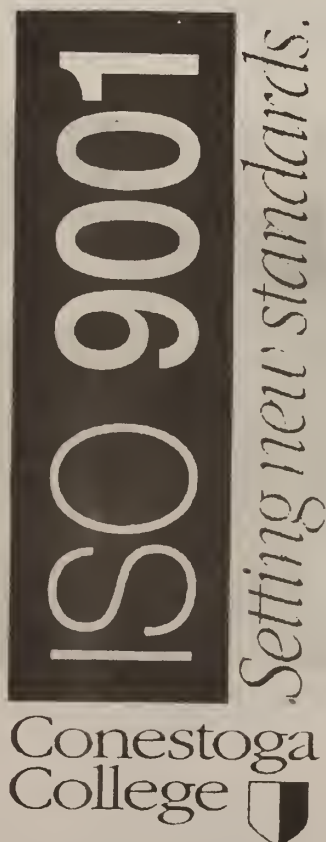
Tracy Oksman, of housekeeping, dusts out lockers outside room 2A101 on July 20.

(Photo by Tracy Ford)

Conestoga
College

Quality Policy

Conestoga College continually seeks opportunities for improvement to meet and exceed the needs of our students, employees and communities.



Learning How to Smile teaches fans about life, love and unemployed boyfriends

The fourth offering from the band Everclear is as dynamic and life-touching as its predecessors.

The new album, *Songs From an American Movie, Vol. One: Learning how to Smile*, is full of songs that will be hits.

Their first single off the new album, *Wonderful*, is already zooming up the charts. Reminiscent of the single, *Father of Mine*, off Everclear's previous album, *So Much for the Afterglow*, *Wonderful* is a heart wrenching song from the point of view of a young child in the middle of a divorce.

Art Alexikis, the frontman for the band, wrote *Wonderful* based on his own experiences. His parents divorced when he was five years old.

Lyrics like "I want the things that I had before, like a Star Wars poster on my bedroom door. I wish I could count to 10, make everything be wonderful again," remind listeners of the fragile nature of childhood when promis-

es indeed meant everything.

Alexikis is hailed as one of the most brilliant new song writers and composers by critics, and Everclear was named *Modern Artist of the Year* in 1998 by *Billboard* magazine.

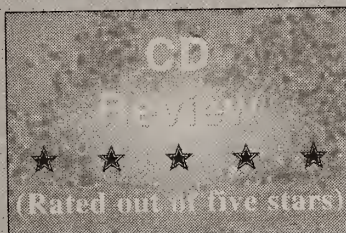
The group dynamic and harmony between Alexikis and fellow band members Craig Montoya and Greg Ekland makes the group's sound infectious and full of energy.

The offering from Everclear is music to roll down the windows of your car to and crank up the volume on the car stereo with.

The same personal themes that Alexikis explored in his songs on the first albums are explored again in *Learning How to Smile*. Drug abuse, suicide, broken childhood and sexual antagonism are all themes of songs in all four of Everclear's albums, but that's what makes



Everclear's new album gives listeners more of what they've come to expect and enjoy from the band. (Internet photo)



their songs so intriguing.

Alexikis came from a broken home. His older brother died of a heroin overdose when Alexikis was 12. He recovered from a serious drug problem, survived a divorce and is now a father. Many book writers follow the adage, "write what you know." Alexikis does this as well with his songs, and it makes the albums more personal, and the emotion is evident in the music.

All but two of the songs on *Learning How to Smile* were written by Alexikis and one of them was already a hit.

The remake of *Brown-Eyed Girl*, by Van Morrison, is a surprising but welcome addition.

The song that catches interest the most is *Unemployed Boyfriend*, which starts off with a young woman calling her best friend to tell an amazing story of what happened to her at the

unemployment office when a guy came up to her and said, "This is gonna sound a little obsessive." The song goes on to tell how the guy professes his love for her and that he will always let her win, treat her like a queen, go to all the chick flick movies she wants to see, and never be her unemployed boyfriend.

The comments from the girl to her best friend during the course of the song make it sound more realistic; the girl's disbelief and excitement make the guy's promises sound more and more plausible.

Songs From an American Movie Vol. One: Learning How to Smile was released on July 15 and by July 22, more than 10,000 copies had been sold in Canada.

This is not the last listeners will hear of Everclear in 2000. The band is planning on releasing the follow up album, *Songs from an American Movie Vol. Two: Good Time for a Bad Attitude*, by the end of the year.

Spine-chilling flick hits the theatres

A new movie hit movie theatres July 21 in the spirit of *The Sixth Sense*, creating a spellbinding tale of action and consequence.

Dr. Norman Spencer, played by Harrison Ford, betrayed his wife Claire, played by Michelle Pfeiffer. He cheated on her with one of his students and now he is trying to get his life back together. Claire is oblivious to the truth and knows nothing about her husband's extra-curricular activities until she begins to hear voices. Norman, who has almost forgotten about his affair, isn't sure whether to believe that his wife hears and sees a ghost-like creature who resembles a young, beautiful woman.

Claire begins to piece things together and figures out the ghost's connection to her family. Norman begins to remember and he too, is wrapped in the twists and turns that drive the movie to the climax.

Directed by Robert Zemeckis,

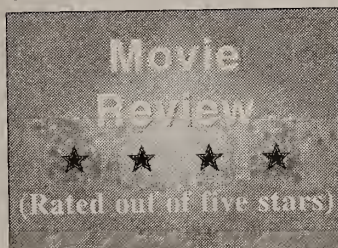
director of *Forrest Gump*, the movie takes control of the viewers' senses and drives them along the twisted tale of true love and obsession.

With excellent cinematography, the movie has a free-flowing script and totally believable acting, although the plot could be better. Hollywood insists on producing movie after movie dealing with the supernatural, and now, after the craze over *The Blair Witch Project* and *The Sixth Sense*, the public can't seem to get enough of it.

In its mega craze to punch out horror and suspenseful flicks, many directors and writers are more apt to leave gaps.

As a regular couple, Ford and Pfeiffer play their roles with amazing believability, but as they become twisted into the horrific aspects of the story, the pair begin to lose their believability a little. It is feasible that the actors, neither of

whom have been in a horror flick in over a decade, couldn't get away from the lights and cameras enough to portray the characters thoroughly.



Or it could be that audiences have seen so many cheesy horror flicks with screaming young girls and shower scenes that the expectation of such a movie is limited.

Nonetheless, the cast is able to muster enough acting ability to portray a regular married couple and the horror associated with paranormal occurrences.

What Lies Beneath will not be as

popular as its horror counterparts, but is sure to leave a lasting impression.

This movie is not appropriate for young children – as if a parent would allow their child to watch a horror flick at a young age. However, it can definitely keep the chills coming for the adults who can appreciate the suspense and reality.

The realism of the movie – the big empty house at night with the lake outside – creates a picture-perfect setting and the irony of the situation is hilarious. The previews have set audiences up for a life less ordinary and that is what they get. Viewers shouldn't be fooled by the seemingly straight forward plot; there are enough twists and turns to keep them on their toes.



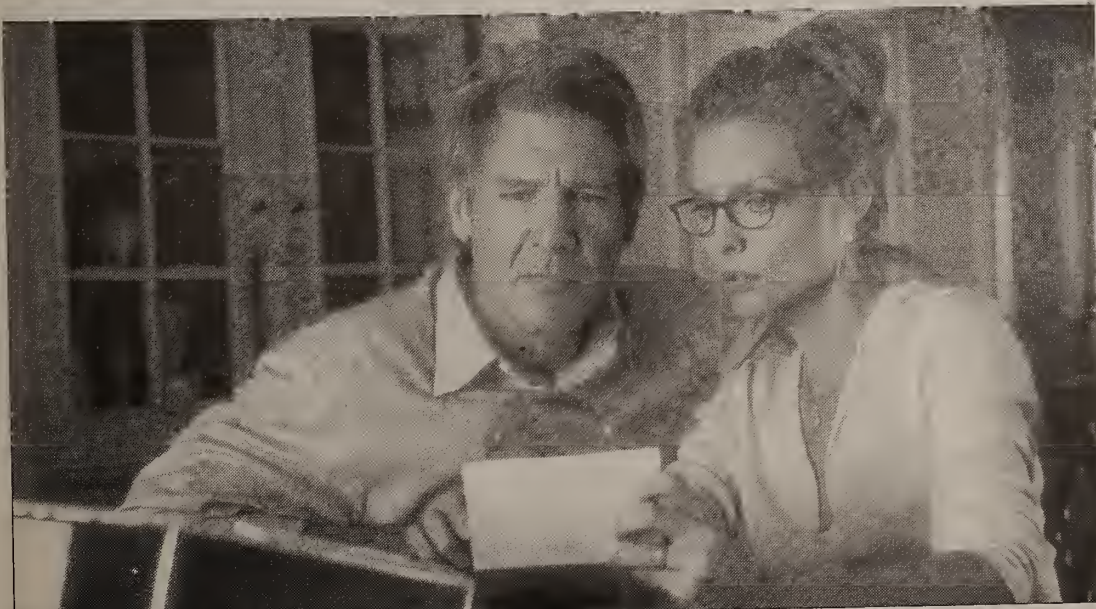
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Michelle Pfeiffer and Harrison Ford try to figure out clues to why they are being haunted in their own house in *What Lies Beneath*. (Internet Photo)



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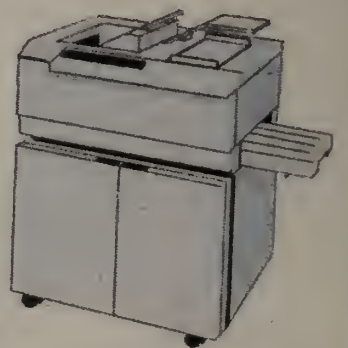
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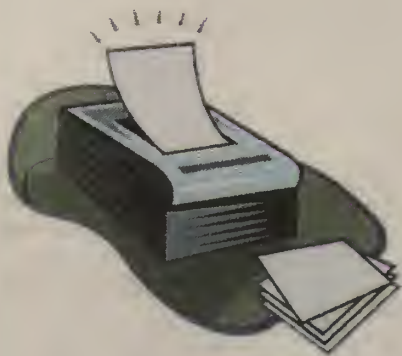
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